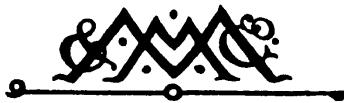


MAKERS OF THE ARYA SAMAJ

BOOK I



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MAKERS OF THE ARYA SAMAJ

BOOK I

SHORT BIOGRAPHIES OF
SWAMI SHRADDHANAND AND MAHATMA HANS RAJ

BY
DIWAN CHAND SHARMA

AUTHOR OF
“HINDU HEROES AND HEROINES”

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
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1935

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DEDICATED TO
MY REVERED FATHER
GOSAIN NIHAL CHAND
WHO FIRST INTRODUCED ME TO THE
ARYA SAMAJ

I HAVE written these books to make people familiar with the lives and works of some of the most outstanding personalities connected with the Arya Samaj. In order to make their appeal as wide as possible I have written them in rather simple language. I trust these books will be read by everybody who is interested in the achievements of the great. They will, I am sure, afford a particular delight to the young, for they will inspire them to live nobly and unselfishly. It need not be added that every attempt has been made to make these books as free from the sectarian spirit as possible.

My thanks are due to L. Mool Raj, B.A., B.T., a devout Arya Samajist, for reading through these books. I am also obliged to Mr. Sant Lal Vidyarthi, B.A., for going through the lives of Pt. Guru Dutt, Pt. Lekh Ram and Swami Shraddhanand.

D. C. S.

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SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

TALWAN is a small town in the district of Jullundur. Here lived a noble family of Kshatriyas. One of these was L. Nanak Chand. He was born in 1827. He was the eldest of six brothers.

When he was a boy his father taught him to worship the god Shiva. This he did every day. It is said that he kept it up until his death.

At the age of eighteen he left his native place. For some time he went about in search of work. He went to Kapurthala, where his uncle was employed in the police. There he assisted him with his duties. But he was not paid for it. Soon he got a chance to show how clever he was. A theft took place in the palace of the Maharaja and he was asked to discover the thief. He was able to do so and was then given a job in the police.

He did not stay long at Kapurthala. After some time he left for Sialkot. There he got employment as a cashier. But he did not stay

long even in this situation. He went to Amritsar and held a post in the tehsil. However, he did not like this work and left for Lahore.

He was at Lahore when the Mutiny of 1857 broke out. Since he was very fond of an active life he joined some Sikh soldiers. All these were going to fight for the English. He went with them as far as Hisar. There he found that all these men were without anything to eat. At this he made up his mind to get them some food.

He went to the city and walked through its streets. After a while he came across a rich merchant. He was going to feed a large number of Brahmins. He had prepared a rich meal for them and was waiting for them to come. But he waited in vain. None of them dared leave his house as life was not safe.

L. Nanak Chand saw all this. He then went up to the merchant and asked, "Why are you worried, friend? As you know, the Brahmins are not coming to enjoy your meal. But let me tell you they are not the only persons who should be fed. There are a large number of soldiers in this town who are without food. Why don't you give them a meal and earn their thanks?" This

seemed to please the merchant, and he agreed. Thus the soldiers came to have a good meal.

For doing this his services were rewarded. He was given a permanent place in the cavalry and went to fight in Nepal. When the battle was over, he was made a Police Inspector at Bareilly, in the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh..

While in Nepal in 1858 he received the happy news that a son had been born to him. Although it was his sixth child he felt very pleased. This child was called Munshi Ram. He afterwards came to be known as Swami Shraddhanand.

Then L. Nanak Chand settled at Bareilly. He soon sent for all the members of his family. The first few years of the life of Munshi Ram were spent there. Though he was at that time only a child of three, yet he won everybody's heart by his sweet talk.

At this time he gave great promise of his future ability and intelligence. A teacher used to come to their house to teach his two elder brothers. Though these two did not seem to profit much from their lessons, Munshi Ram did. What his other brothers learnt with much effort he remembered without any difficulty. It was, therefore, no

wonder that after some time the little child was able to read some of the elementary textbooks in Persian.

L. Nanak Chand was transferred from Bareilly to Badayun. From there he went to Benares. It was at this place that Munshi Ram was invested with the sacred thread. After this he was placed under a teacher who taught him Hindi.

But the most interesting thing was that at this time he began to worship, like his father, the god Shiva. He also read regularly the Ramayana, which had a great deal of influence on him. This was at the time when Swami Dayanand visited Benares. But neither Munshi Ram nor any other member of his family went to see or hear him. It was said that the Swami was a godless sorcerer. It was dangerous to go near him because he made other people give up their faith in God.

From Benares L. Nanak Chand went to Banda. There Munshi Ram was put in the local school. But he was made to read Urdu and Persian instead of Hindi. This did not mean that he lost his interest in Hindi. On the other hand, he came to have a greater interest in it. He read it for pleasure at home.

After some time he fell dangerously ill. His parents lost all hope of his life. They sent for many doctors, but not one of them could do much for him. At last they called in a physician who was a God-fearing man. He treated his patients free. But this was not the only thing he did. Every evening he gave readings from the holy books. People came in large numbers to listen to him. His medicine cured Munshi Ram, so the parents felt very grateful to him. They also began to listen to his readings. "These," wrote Munshi Ram afterwards, "left a deep mark on my character." All his life he felt grateful to this gentleman, for he taught him what goodness really is.

After leaving Banda, L. Nanak Chand held a post at Mirzapur. Near this place a fair was held in honour of a goddess. Munshi Ram often went there in the company of his father. He saw many interesting things. He came across persons who did much evil in the name of religion. The character of his father's orderly interested him most of all. He was a Brahmin, yet he did many evil things. He told lies, he gambled, he drank, he took bribes, and he cheated people. He still called himself religious because he often went to

the temple of the goddess. Even the boy Munshi Ram failed to understand this man.

L. Nanak Chand again went to Benares. But this time he occupied a higher position than before, and all the rich people of Benares were very anxious to please him. It being the end of the rainy season, Benares was the scene of many festivities. Munshi Ram had his share of them. He attended feasts, he rode on elephants, and saw many performances. All this pleased him very much.

In this way his studies were neglected for a few months. But after a time he was put in a local school. There he began to read English. His life in school had a good effect upon him. It taught him to be regular. It is said that at this time he got up early in the morning. Then he went to the river for a bathe. He also took exercise in an Indian gymnasium. After this he went to the temple of Vishwa Nath in order to say his prayers. Then he went home and had his breakfast. After this he went to school. This regularity he kept up for a long time.

Soon L. Nanak Chand left Benares for Balia. There Munshi Ram was admitted to the local school. In that school he read English with a

Bengali gentleman, who took a great interest in him. So his knowledge of English improved very much. For his ability in English he was twice awarded prizes. In addition to this, Munshi Ram began to learn wrestling. L. Nanak Chand was so pleased with his son's ability that he thought of sending him to a better school.

Munshi Ram was then sent to the Queen's Collegiate School at Benares. At that time this was the best school in the whole of the province, and Munshi Ram felt glad to join it. For some time he worked here very regularly at his books. He also paid much attention to his health. The result was that he was liked at school as well as elsewhere.

On account of his regular exercises he developed into a fine youth. So he became a terror to all the bullies of his school. It is interesting to relate that he always tried to protect his weak class-mates from these bullies.

After some time Munshi Ram sat for the Entrance examination. He did all his papers well and expected to succeed. But only a day before the examination was over, he was told that all the students would have to sit again for their examination in English. This was done, because

it was suspected that the English questions had leaked out. Munshi Ram was very annoyed at this. He was all the more annoyed because he would have to put off going to see his mother at Talwan.

For some time he did not know what to do. At last he made up his mind not to take the examination.

Then he set out for his native place all alone. There a happy event awaited him. He was to be engaged to the daughter of a rich man. His mother was naturally glad to see him. But he reached the place in rather low spirits. It was because he had lost some of his things on the way.

After a few months he went back to his school. But he took no interest in his studies. He absented himself from the school very often. At last his name was struck off the rolls of the school. But his father knew nothing about it. He did not know that his son spent most of his time in seeing the sights of Benares.

He also developed a passion for reading novels at this time. So fond was he of reading that he would even read them by moonlight. But his father never thought that he was neglecting his

studies. On the other hand he thought the boy was devoting his time to his own books. It was no wonder that he failed in the examination that year.

He was now sent to a Mission School at Benares. In spite of everything, he had kept up the habit of going to the temple every morning and evening. But one day a strange thing happened. He went as usual to the temple of Vishwa Nath. But he was not permitted to enter it. This was because some Rani was at that time worshipping there. Young Munshi Ram could not understand this. "Why should not the temple be open to all, rich and poor alike?" he asked himself. "Why should the god favour the rich and neglect the poor? Should he not be good to all?"

On account of this he lost his faith in idol-worship. He even thought of turning Christian. But Christianity soon lost its interest for him. He therefore became a prey to many doubts and fears. His mother also died at this time. All these things made him very unhappy. Yet he was still able to pass the examination. He stood first among the successful candidates that year.

He now joined the Queen's College at Benares. But there again he fell into evil company. He

smoked a great deal. It is said that he also took to other evil pastimes. The result was that he went from bad to worse. He did not do any serious reading, but devoted himself only to the study of novels. He specially read the novels of Sir Walter Scott. These fired his imagination and he wanted to play the knight. He liked to lead a life of adventure, and do all sorts of daring things.

But all this came to an end when his father asked him to go to Talwan for his marriage. Before he went there he spent a few days at Muttra. At this place he saw many interesting things. Two of these he could never forget. The one was the feast which his father gave to the Choube Brahmins. Four of these persons were invited. They ate such a lot that Munshi Ram's father feared for their health. But nothing happened to them. They were found quite fit in the evening, begging for more food.

The other was the conduct of the Gosains. These persons seemed to be good, but really they were very wicked. One day Munshi Ram chanced to see their wickedness with his own eyes. Both these things made him lose his faith in the Brahmin priests of India.

After some days' stay at Muttra, Munshi Ram reached Talwan. There his marriage was celebrated. He spent about a month there, some time in his own house and some time in the house of his father-in-law. Then he thought of going back to Benares. But before he did so he went to Bareilly where his father was the Kotwal of the city. At Bareilly things were no better than at Benares. Here, also, the rich people lived a life of luxury. They drove about in fine carriages, they drank heavily and were fond of music. Some of them even married dancing girls. Munshi Ram saw something of this society, and in the end came to despise this kind of life.

Eventually he gave up his idea of going to Benares. He went to Allahabad instead and joined the Muir Central College. There he devoted himself to his studies. He took a great interest in Chemistry and Psychology. After some time, he took his examination, but did not succeed. This was because he fell ill on the day when he had to sit for the paper on Logic.

After this he did not like to stay in Allahabad. He thought of joining the Muslim College at Aligarh. But as soon as he reached that place, cholera broke out. The college was, therefore,

closed, and he had to go back to Bareilly once again.

While he was at Bareilly, Swami Dayanand arrived there. Munshi Ram's father attended some of his lectures and asked his son to do the same. But he did not like to do so. "There cannot be much in the lectures of a gentleman who knows only Sanskrit," he said to himself. But his father pressed him again and again to go to the Swami's lectures. At last he agreed.

When he arrived at the place of the lecture, he felt very surprised for in the audience he saw some Englishmen. But he was all the more surprised when he listened to the lecture. He wondered how a man who knew only Sanskrit could be so interesting and convincing. After this it became a habit with him to see as much of Swami Dayanand as possible. He did not go to the lectures only, but also went to the Swami's private meetings. From these he learnt a lot about the Swami.

But the Swami did more than reveal his knowledge in his lectures. He was a reformer and found fault with everything that he found bad amongst the Hindus. One day he criticised the Christians also. At this the Commissioner sent

for the Swami's host and said to him, "Please tell the Swami not to say hard things about other people. By doing so he injures their feelings." The host agreed to do so. But when he went up to the Swami, his heart sank within him. He asked other people to do this difficult task. But none dared do it. After much hesitation he at last gave the message to the Swami himself.

Swami Dayanand heard him patiently and kept quiet. But next day in the course of his lecture the Swami said, "I will always speak the truth, come what may. I do not care for the Collector nor am I afraid of the Commissioner. Even the Governor cannot hold me back from telling the truth. I stand for truth and I will die for it."

All these things impressed Munshi Ram very much. But still he said to himself, "The Swami would be a very great man if only he did not believe in God and the Vedas." One day he even made up his mind to have a talk with the Swami on the existence of God. The Swami gave such convincing replies to his questions that he could not say much. Then he said to him, "It is true you have more logic than I. But though your logic makes me dumb, my mind remains unchanged. I cannot believe in God in spite of what you say."

At this the Swami said, " Nobody can convince you of the existence of God. It is only He who can do away with your doubts."

The Swami left Bareilly after some days, but Munshi Ram never forgot him. He remembered his faith in God, his logic, his humour and his fearlessness. But still he did not believe in God.

Another person who influenced him at this time was his wife. She was an extremely good woman and was staying with him at Bareilly. It was the rule of her life never to take her meals before her husband had had his. One day Munshi Ram did not arrive till late in the night. But she waited patiently for him. At last he came home slightly the worse for drink. Instead of reproaching him she looked after him with great care. When he recovered he asked her, " Have you had your meals? " She replied, " How can I, when you have not had yours." This act of devotion on her part impressed him very much. From that day he began to look upon her as his best friend. He made up his mind not to keep back anything from her in future.

She also did him another good turn. Munshi Ram had run heavily into debt and did not know

how to pay it off. One day he happened to mention this fact to her. She at once said, "Never mind, I have some spare gold ornaments which I will give you. Please dispose of them and pay your creditors." At first Munshi Ram hesitated to do this. But at last he had to accept this kind offer. Thus he paid off his debts, but he never forgot the goodness of his wife.

On account of these things Munshi Ram could not go on with his studies. But his father was very anxious about his future. All his other sons were settled in life. Only Munshi Ram was as yet without a situation. Soon an idea occurred to him. He thought of approaching the Commissioner for a job for his son. The Commissioner was very kind to him, and said he thought that he could do something for his son.

So father and son went and saw the Commissioner together. He said that he would make Munshi Ram a Tehsildar. But to start with he asked him to work as a Naib Tehsildar. Munshi Ram felt very happy at this, and started his work in earnest. After a few months a strange thing happened which caused him to resign his post.

It happened like this. A regiment was stationed a few miles away from Bareilly. Munshi Ram was asked to arrange for provisions for it. He therefore made all kinds of arrangements. He also went to see things for himself. But when he reached the place, one person complained that all his eggs had been taken by the soldiers and he had not been paid anything for them.

Munshi Ram felt annoyed at this. He, therefore, went to the Colonel and complained about the soldiers. But the Colonel did not pay any heed to his complaints. On the other hand he treated him rather roughly. Thereupon Munshi Ram threatened to withdraw all the dealers in provisions. This threat enraged the officer very much and he told Munshi Ram to do his worst. So Munshi Ram went away with all his men. Thus the soldiers were left without any provisions for the night.

Munshi Ram reported this matter to his officer, who told him that he had behaved rashly. He further asked him to see the Collector on the subject. When Munshi Ram went there, he found the Colonel also present. After listening to both these persons the Collector asked Munshi Ram to tender an apology to the Colonel. Munshi

Ram did so and left the place immediately. This event disturbed his mind a great deal. He made up his mind not to have anything to do with service of any kind. The kind-hearted Commissioner even offered him the job of a Tehsildar, but he did not accept it.

After this somebody suggested to the father that he should ask his son to become a pleader. This idea appealed to both father and son. Munshi Ram was, therefore, asked to go to Lahore and join the Law College. He acted as his father advised him. But at Lahore he did not apply himself to his studies. He met an old friend of his who asked him to run a shop in partnership with him. Munshi Ram did so, but soon found that the man was a cheat. He, therefore, left this shop very soon. For this and other reasons he did not attend sufficient lectures and was not sent up for the examination.

But he joined the college again next year. However, he still found it difficult to work hard at his books. Instead of books on Law he read novels. He also wasted much time in the company of friends. These were not a good set, for they made him do many evil things. It was but natural that he failed in the examination that year.

Munshi Ram was now a grown man, yet he had no means of livelihood. This worried him a great deal. At last he made up his mind to go out in search of work. But when he got into the train he said to himself, "It is no use running away from home and the examination. It is a sin to be a failure in life. I must first go to Lahore and take my examination." He therefore set out for Lahore and sat for the examination. He passed successfully.

Then he set up his practice as a Mukhtar at Jullundur. He did better in his profession than he had expected. This encouraged him very much. But he also felt that it was not good to be only a Mukhtar. He wanted to qualify himself as a pleader. But he could not make up his mind to leave Jullundur and go to Lahore in order to continue his studies.

One day he discovered that after the following year none but a graduate would be eligible to sit for the Pleader's Examination. This made him rather nervous about his future. He resolved, therefore, to go to Lahore immediately and join the Law College.

But he had to postpone his departure for Lahore for some time. This was because his friends

stood in his way. He was a popular person at Jullundur. So all his friends wanted to entertain him before he left. Thus a number of feasts took place. Munshi Ram attended every one of these. Many days passed, but still there was no end to these feasts.

One night he was present at the dinner of a friend of his, where most of the guests were drinking. It is said that Munshi Ram also drank a little. But one of the guests drank so much that he could not walk steadily. Munshi Ram saw him home. But when this man reached his house he started to drink again. The result was that he felt very sick. He also said many improper things.

To Munshi Ram this man appeared to be a confirmed drunkard. He had lost all control over himself. He was, in the eyes of some, an object of laughter, but to Munshi Ram he appeared to be an object of pity. "So this comes of drinking. It makes beasts of us. It makes us forget ourselves. It leads us to do things which no man in his senses would ever do," thought Munshi Ram.

It then seemed as if Swami Dayanand stood in front of him. He seemed to ask him, "What

have you made of your life? Why have you fallen so low? Won't you give up this bad company and make an attempt to be a good man?"

Munshi Ram turned these things over in his mind for some time. At last he resolved never to touch wine again. After this he went to sleep. Next morning when he woke up, he was pleased with his decision. That very day he left for Lahore. Needless to say, he remained faithful to his resolution all his life.

At Lahore he devoted himself to his studies with all his heart. In his spare time he attended meetings of the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj. One Brahmo preacher impressed him very much by his earnestness and sincerity. He even thought of joining the Brahmo Samaj. But he could not reconcile himself to one of the doctrines of the Brahmo Samaj. He had, therefore, to give up this idea. It was at this time that he got a copy of the Satyarth Prakash (The Light of Truth) by Swami Dayanand. He became interested in it, and this completed his conversion to the Arya Samaj. Then he joined it. He was welcomed by all the Arya Samajists. They felt they had drawn a really able young man towards

the Arya Samaj. It is said that one of the elders remarked at that time, "This young man will infuse a new spirit into the Arya Samaj." These words ultimately proved true.

Munshi Ram proved a zealous worker in the cause of the Arya Samaj. Even though he was a student, he tried to explain its objects by lecturing. His first public speech was made at Jullundur. It was on the subject of early marriage and the practice of Brahmcharya. Such was the effect of his lecture on the audience that one of them said, "Though my wife wants to betroth our son, although he is only one year old, I will not marry him till he is twenty-five."

About this time Munshi Ram's father fell a prey to a cruel disease called paralysis. Munshi Ram went to his native place to look after him. The patient soon recovered but Munshi Ram stayed on there.

One day there arose a difference between father and son. It was one of the sacred days of the Hindus. On this day pitchers full of water and fruit are given away to the Brahmins. Munshi Ram's father got a great many pitchers and a lot of fruit for this purpose. He wanted every member of his family to give something away. Everyone

but Munshi Ram did so. Thereupon the father asked him in an angry tone why he was not doing so. Munshi Ram said, "I have no faith in this kind of charity. I have a great regard for the real Brahmins, but none for the sort of Brahmins we find here to-day. I do not want to disobey you, but also I do not want to do that which I think unwise." Thereupon the father kept quiet.

After some time Munshi Ram thought of leaving for Lahore. That day his father asked him again to make some offerings to the god in the temple. But he refused. At this his father flew into a rage and said, "If you are inclined this way I do not think my last rites will be performed properly." Munshi Ram then said, "I do not want to disobey you, but surely you would not like me to do a thing which I consider wrong. I do not believe in these idols and, therefore, cannot make any offerings to them." On hearing this his father heaved a sigh and said, "God's will be done."

It is not, however, out of place to relate that after some time his father also got interested in the Arya Samaj. Then he came to admire his son for his honesty and frankness.

On reaching Lahore Munshi Ram again worked hard at his books. But much of his time he gave to the Arya Samaj. He sat for the examination, though he was not declared successful.

Then he started his practice at Jullundur. His clerk had the words "Legal Practitioner" written on his signboard. As Munshi Ram thought it was not true he had them removed at once. One day his friends asked him to dinner. They all persuaded him to take drink. But no sooner was the cup put to his lips than he was sick. At this all his friends felt ashamed of themselves.

In the meantime his father's health went from bad to worse, so Munshi Ram set out for Talwan. When he reached home his father showed him his will. He had divided his lands and houses equally between his sons, but had left all the cash and ornaments to Munshi Ram. Munshi Ram thought it would be unjust on his part to take all that. So he tore the will into pieces. This made his father believe all the more in his goodness. After a few days his father died. His dead body was cremated according to the Vedic rites. After his death all the property was divided equally amongst the brothers.

For some time after this Munshi Ram divided his time between his practice and the Arya Samaj. But as time passed the Arya Samaj came to claim more and more of his attention. He took part in debates. He organised prayer meetings of the families of the Arya Samajists. He delivered lectures on the Arya Samaj. He also helped L. Dev Raj of Jullundur to devise new ways for collecting funds for the Arya Samaj. Two of these may be mentioned here. One was that every Arya Samajist was asked to set apart a handful of flour every day. The other was that the Arya Samajists did not destroy waste paper but sold it to help the funds of the Arya Samaj.

At the same time Munshi Ram took seriously to the study of the Shastras. The need of this was impressed upon him by Pt. Guru Dutt and other devoted young men. This study not only increased his knowledge, but also enabled him to face disappointments with calmness. In other words, it strengthened his character. Munshi Ram was doing well in his practice at this time. He was a good speaker and knew the law well. For these reasons he was much sought after by litigants.

It is said about a certain Sikh gentleman that he wanted to engage a lawyer for his case. He

went about the courts and heard every lawyer speak. None impressed him very much, until he heard Munshi Ram argue a case in court. He was so impressed that he engaged him for his case with a fee of Rs. 1,000. After some time Munshi Ram's practice began to dwindle because he did not accept cases which involved fraud or dishonesty of any kind. He never regretted this, however, for his profession did not mean much to him. The Arya Samaj was everything. He was one of those Arya Samajists who practise what they believe. For instance, he believed that women should not be kept in purdah. So he asked his wife to discard it. Then he took her out with him on long walks. This was something very unusual in those days.

He also believed in educating girls. So he sent his eldest girl to a local girls' school which was run by a Christian mission. He was, however, surprised to find one day that the little girl was singing a song about Christ. This pained him very much. So with the help of L. Dev Raj he founded a girls' school. This is now known as the Kanya Maha Vidyalaya of Jullundur. It is a fine institution and has a large number of girls on its rolls.

Munshi Ram now felt that it was necessary to have a newspaper to make the work and the ideals of the Arya Samaj popular. He therefore started the *Sad Dharm Pracharak*. Sixteen other gentlemen each paid Rs. 25, but after a while Munshi paid them off. Then he supported it by himself. This paper rendered a great service to the cause of the Arya Samaj. Though it was at first published in Urdu, yet its Urdu was such as contained a very large number of Hindi words. In this way its readers came to be familiar with Hindi also.

Munshi Ram was an untiring worker in the cause of the Arya Samaj, and he spent much of his time in visiting new places to establish Arya Samajes there. He was a fearless man, and spoke strongly against those who did not live up to the creed of the Arya Samaj. By doing so he made many enemies. But he was not afraid of them. About this time the Kumbh fair was held at Hardwar. Munshi Ram worked hard for it and was put in charge of the Prachar work of the Arya Samaj there.

But his life became darkened by death. His eldest brother-in-law died, and he felt his loss very much. Then he heard the sad news of the

death of Pt. Guru Dutt. Both of them were great friends and fellow-workers in the same cause. So he felt very sad at this loss. L. Sain Das, the leader of the Arya Samaj, also died. This was a great blow to the cause of the Arya Samaj.

He had hardly recovered from these shocks when his wife passed away. She was a very good woman, and her death caused him much grief. After her death he found a message that she had left for him. It said, "I am about to die. Please forgive all my faults. You will probably get a better, wiser and prettier wife than myself. But please do not forget the children. Good-bye." These words touched the heart of Munshi Ram very much. He vowed never to marry again, and he kept his vow.

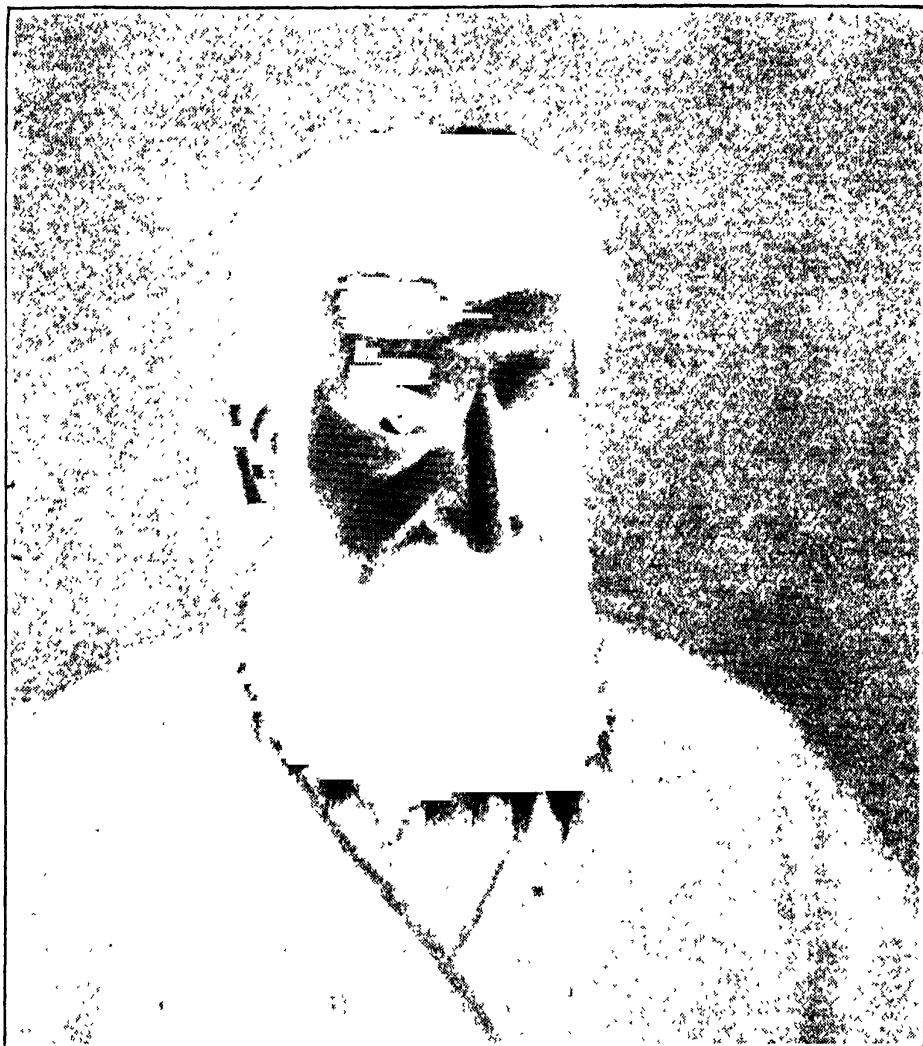
At this time he was elected President of the Arya Pritinidhi Sabha, Lahore. This was the chief organisation of the Arya Samajes. But this proved a very difficult job for him. It became all the more difficult on account of the differences between the Arya Samajists. On the one hand, there were some who thought that the D.A.-V. College, Lahore was of great importance. On the other hand, there were others who did not think so. This struggle lasted long. In the end the Arya

Samaj came to be divided into two camps. One party was led by L. Hans Raj, Principal of the D.A.-V. College, Lahore. The other was led by Munshi Ram.

Now Munshi Ram entered upon one of the busiest periods of his life. He edited his weekly paper; he looked after his practice; and above all he gave much of his time to the Arya Pritinidhi Sabha. But he was not satisfied with all this. He loved the ancient Aryan culture and wanted to revive it. The best way to do so, he thought, was to found a Gurukula. It was to be a kind of college where boys were to be taught from the age of six to twenty-five. This was the ancient Aryan ideal of education. It was also thought that these students should stay away from cities. They would thus live where they studied. And this should go on till they had finished their education.

It was a new idea, and nobody knew how it would be received by the people. But Munshi Ram's energy and determination overcame all obstacles. First of all, he toured the country to collect thirty thousand rupees. After having done so he fixed upon a fine spot at Kangri near Hardwar for the buildings of the Gurukula. This was the

gift of a rich landlord of Najibabad named Munshi Aman Singh. When Munshi Ram took it over,



MAHATMA MUNSHI RAM AS GOVERNOR OF THE GURUKULA,
KANGRI

it was nothing but a jungle. But soon he had it cleared. After some time it became one of the best sites in the country. All this was due to

the self-sacrifice of Munshi Ram and his band of devoted workers.

The Gurukula, thought Munshi Ram, should differ from ordinary schools and colleges. In the first place, it should enjoin celibacy on the students. In other words the students should cultivate purity in thought, word and deed. This could only be done if the students were kept away from the temptations of cities. He also believed that education should be imparted to the students through the medium of Hindi. This appeared to be at first a very difficult task. But afterwards people came to believe that it was a very wise thing to do.

But Munshi Ram did not want the Gurukula to impart instruction only in the ancient Sanskrit. He also wanted the students to learn modern languages and science. On this question there arose a difference between him and some of his co-workers. But Munshi Ram remained firm. Some of his devoted friends left him, but time has justified his actions.

Munshi Ram also believed that the Gurukula should be independent of Government control. He did not think that the aim of education should be to qualify students for employment. He

believed that the aim of education was to develop character and to produce good and noble citizens. So he said, "My students will not run after petty jobs. They will do something better and nobler. They will be the builders of a nation."

These were the ideals that inspired Munshi Ram. To carry them into effect he gave up everything. He left both his home and his practice. From this time onward the Gurukula was everything to him. He lived there and fully shared the life of the students. He prayed with them, he took exercise with them and dined with them. Sometimes he also took part in instructing them. Whatever time was to spare was given to the work of building and to the laying out of the garden. No wonder that everybody called him Mahatma, or the great-souled one.

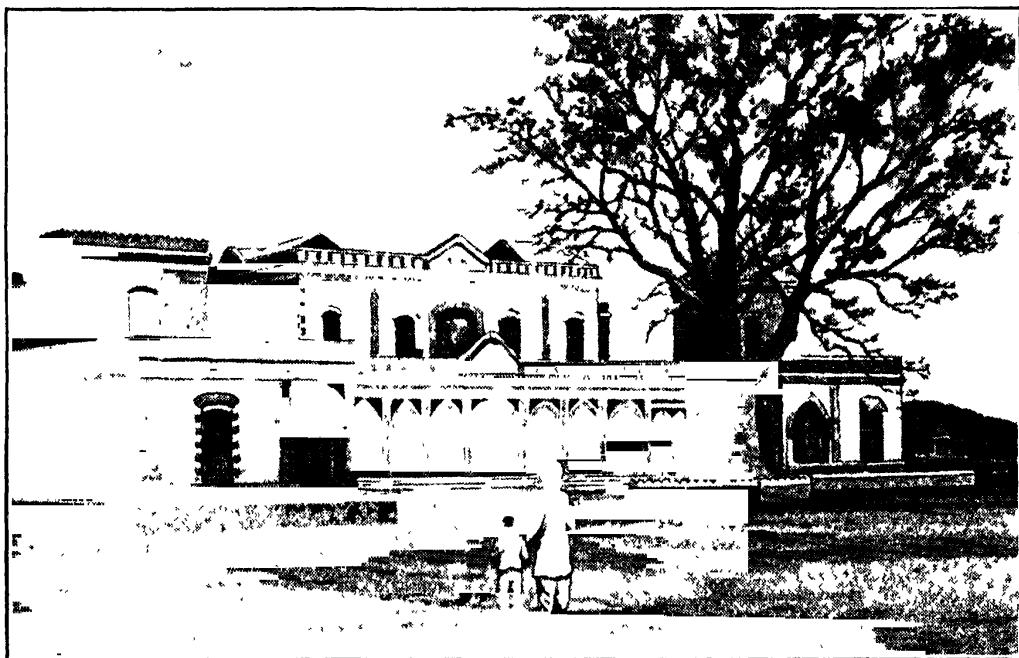
Just at this time the Arya Samajists became suspected by their rulers. They were subjected to all kinds of persecution. The most well-known of these was the prosecution of the Arya Samajists by the Patiala State. Most of the Arya Samajists there were arrested. Then a case was started against them for disloyalty to the State. But while the State itself engaged the best English

lawyers, these people were not permitted to have any lawyers outside the State.

Mahatma Munshi Ram saw all this and was very grieved. So he wrote articles to arouse public opinion. He also toured the province and delivered lectures. Then he collected money for the defence of the Arya Samajists. He himself, assisted by some able lawyers, took the defence into his own hands. Finally, he saw the Maharaja, to whom he represented the true facts of the case. The result of all this was that the case against the Arya Samajists was withdrawn. But the Maharaja ordered that all Arya Samajists who were not residents of the State should leave within seven days. Through this order many of them lost their jobs. But Mahatma Munshi Ram employed some of them in the Gurukula itself. In this manner he saved some people from a great deal of misfortune.

During this period the mission of the Gurukula also came to be misunderstood. Some thought that it taught its pupils the use of arms. Others thought that it taught horsemanship. One gentleman wrote in the papers that he had seen with his own eyes the Brahmcharies learning archery. All this implied that the students of the Gurukula

were engaged in some unlawful activities. But Mahatma Munshi Ram soon dispelled all these fears and doubts. He invited the Lieutenant Governor of the U.P. to visit the place. Sir James Meston, now Lord Meston, went there



THE GURUKULA BUILDINGS

three times. The last time he went he was accompanied by the Viceroy of India, Lord Chelmsford. They saw everything with their own eyes. They were struck with the simple life of the students, and admired the courage of Mahatma Munshi Ram.

After some time it occurred to Mahatma Munshi Ram that it would be very useful to have a fixed capital of fifteen lacs for the Gurukula. His idea was to run it with the interest on this sum, plus the fees of the students. To accomplish this he gave up his own money. Then he collected money from others. He wanted to spend this money in building an Agricultural College which should be attached to the Gurukula. He was anxious for the students to learn farming. He also wanted them to receive some kind of industrial training. Above all, he desired that they should have an Ayurvedic college of their own. He was able to have some of these things done, but others remained mere dreams.

By this time the Gurukula had become a great institution. Its fame had spread far and wide. People came from all parts of the world to see it. They were all full of admiration for it. Its site touched their hearts, while its scheme of studies filled them with delight. They all congratulated Mahatma Munshi Ram on his work.

But Mahatma Munshi Ram himself was not quite satisfied with what he had done. It is true that Gurukula had become popular, but this was not the aim of his life.

According to the Shastras every Hindu has to pass through four stages of life. First of all he is to be a student. Then he has to live as a householder. After this he has to cut himself away from his family. Last of all, he has to become a Sanyasi, when he has to give up everything. Mahatma Munshi Ram had passed through the first three stages. He now wanted to be a Sanyasi. He wanted to give up everything. It was his desire to devote himself entirely to the contemplation of God and the service of others.

But his friends did not want him to do this. They thought that he should continue to devote himself to the Gurukula and the Arya Samaj. But Mahatma Munshi Ram, after much consideration, made up his mind to become a Sanyasi or a recluse. So he retired to the garden house at Mayapur to think about this question. The more he thought about it the firmer became his resolve. At last he publicly announced that he would leave the Gurukula.

The day arrived when he was to bid farewell to the Gurukula. On that day everybody in the Gurukula gave him a send-off. They all accompanied him in procession as far as Mayapur.

Mahatma Munshi Ram walked at the head of this procession. He had a big staff in his hand and a yellow scarf on his shoulders. He was followed by the principal and the professors of the Gurukula. After this came the old graduates of the Gurukula. These were followed by the students. When the procession reached the place where the families of the professors lived a little child rushed out. He cried, "Grandpa, grandpa," and clung to the knees of the Mahatma. The child was no other than his own grandson. This touched every heart, but Mahatma Munshi Ram remained unmoved.

At Mayapur the ceremony was performed. Mahatma Munshi Ram had his head shaved. He cast off his former clothes and put on the garments of a Sanyasi. Then his name was changed. He now came to be known as Swami Shraddhanand. He vowed that he would not hanker after any worldly thing. He also resolved to devote himself entirely to the service of mankind.

Swami Shraddhanand left Mayapur after the ceremony. He then travelled all over India. In the course of a year or so he delivered as many as three hundred lectures. In all these he emphasised

the need for Brahmcharya or celibacy. He taught that people should build up their character. "Nations," he said, "become great only on account of the character of the persons that compose them." He also thought of writing the history of the Arya Samaj. For this he collected material wherever he went.

But this work had to be suspended for two reasons. In the first place, Swami Shraddhanand learned that the Arya Samajists of Dhaulpur State were in trouble. The State authorities had ordered a part of the Arya Samaj mandir to be demolished. On this site public conveniences were to be constructed. The Arya Samajists resented this and represented their case to the State. But nobody listened to them. At last Swami Shraddhanand was sent for. He went and saw the Prime Minister. But this had no effect. Then Swami Shraddhanand said, "I will starve myself to death unless you change your mind." The authorities then agreed to the demands of the Arya Samajists.

Some other time famine broke out in Gharwal. Swami Shraddhanand was approached by Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya to organise relief there.

So he went and toured the famine-stricken area. He found that the people were really in great distress. So he opened depots for the distribution of grain. At some of these the grain was distributed free. At others it was sold at a very cheap rate.

After leaving Gharwal, Swamiji stayed for some time in the Gurukula, where he wrote a report of the famine relief. Then he left for Delhi. While he was there the Rowlatt Act was passed. This shocked the Indians very much and they agitated against it. The leader of this agitation was Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi wanted to go to Delhi to confer with some other leaders. But he was prevented from doing so. This created a great deal of unrest amongst the people. This showed itself especially at Delhi. Crowds of people came out of their homes and made for the railway station. To prevent them from doing so the Government called out the Military and the Police. A large number of machine guns were also placed in different parts of the city. In spite of all these things the people could not be kept under control.

Then Swami Shraddhanand said to the authorities, "If you do not open fire on the people, I

will send them away to their homes." They agreed to this. So the Swami asked the people to follow him to a place where a meeting was to be held. They all obeyed. He then marched at the head of a large number of people in that direction. But he had not gone very far when he was stopped by some Gurkha soldiers. Not knowing what the matter was they wanted to charge on the crowd. But after baring his breast Swami Shraddhanand went forward and said, "You can charge on me but not on these people." This fearlessness on his part subdued the soldiers. They then let the crowd pass without any trouble.

This act of Swami Shraddhanand made him very dear to the people. He became their hero. They began to look upon him as their guardian and defender. Not only Hindus but also Mohammadans came to hold him in high esteem.

To show their regard for him the Mohammadans asked him to address them in the Jumma Masjid. This was a great honour for the Swami, because no Hindu had ever done so before. Nor has any Hindu been asked to do so since. Swami Shraddhanand then stood on the platform of the mosque

and spoke words of courage and hope to the people. He talked to them about freedom. He told them about the blessings of Hindu-Muslim unity. The words that fell from his lips produced a deep effect on them.

Some time after this Swami Shraddhanand heard about the atrocities of Martial Law in the Punjab. So he went to Amritsar to see these things with his own eyes. He found the people there in great distress. But he comforted them as much as he could. He collected money for them, as well as helped those Indian leaders who wanted to enquire into the matter.

That very year the Indian National Congress was to be held at Amritsar. But the people were so afraid that they did not want to have it there. Swami Shraddhanand came forward and said, "We will hold the Congress here, whatever happens." This heartened the people and they agreed. So he had to make all kinds of preparations. All this meant much work on his part, but he did not mind. At last the session of the Congress was held. He was elected Chairman of the Reception Committee. The address that he wrote at that time was quite unique. It was full

of courage and hope. It was also written in Hindi, a thing which had never been done before.

After this Swamiji had to go back to the Gurukula because it was in difficulties. Everybody felt that none but Swami Shraddhanand could manage it properly. After much hesitation Swamiji made up his mind to go there. He could not bear to think that the Gurukula which he had founded should suffer in any way.

On reaching the Gurukula he saw that its immediate need was money. So he undertook a voyage to Burma to collect funds. There he succeeded in his object. But on his return he fell dangerously ill. On recovering from this illness he realised that he was not strong enough to manage the Gurukula. So he resigned and went back to Delhi.

At Delhi three things engaged his attention. In the first place, he wanted to build a memorial to the victims of Martial Law. But this project failed on account of lack of funds. Then he turned his attention to the uplift of the untouchables. In the suburbs of Delhi there were a large number of chamars. He opened schools for them and worked for them in other ways also. The

thing which attracted him most, however, was the work of unifying the Hindus. He became one of the founders of the Hindu Maha Sabha. The object of this was to unite the Hindus in social, political and religious matters.

About this time Guru ka Bagh, near Amritsar, became a scene of conflict between the Sikhs and the mahant of that place. The mahant claimed the place for himself, but the Sikhs said that it belonged to the Panth. The mahant, therefore, refused to allow the Sikhs to take wood for the free langar or kitchen. Nevertheless the Sikhs went there in large numbers to defy the mahant. But the police came to his aid. So a large number of them were sent to jail every day. When Swami Shraddhanand learnt about it he went to Amritsar. But he was arrested there and sent to jail for a year. This was done to keep him from taking part in the agitation.

After coming out of the jail Swami Shraddhanand went back to Delhi. Soon afterwards he received an invitation from Agra. Some Rajputs there, who were Hindus in everything but in name, were to be converted to Hinduism. This work appealed to him, and he toured the United Provinces for this purpose. He was successful in his mission



SWAMI SHRADDHANAND

and won over the Rajputs. The Rajputs were welcomed back to the fold. In the meantime the Mohammadans took offence at this and tried to undo the Swami's work. But they failed. Then the Swami established the All-India Shuddhi Sabha. The object of this was to bring non-Hindus into the fold of Hinduism.

As the Swami was interested in the unification of the Hindus he did a lot of work for the next session of the Hindu Maha Sabha, which was to be held at Benares. But the Brahmins there disappointed him very much. They did not want to have anything to do with the uplift of the untouchables. They refused to listen either to Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya or to Swami Shraddhanand. At last the Hindu Maha Sabha passed a resolution about the untouchables which did not mean anything. This filled the Swami with grave fear about the future of the Hindus.

Still the Swami did not slacken his efforts in this direction. On his return to Delhi he organised the Dalit-Udhar Sabha. To carry out this mission he gathered round him a band of workers. All these wanted to raise the untouchables by giving them education.

Unfortunately some riots took place between the Hindus and the Mohammadans at Saharanpur, Multan and other places. Delhi was also the scene of a terrible riot. All this upset the Indian leaders very much. Mahatma Gandhi fasted for twenty-one days in order to do penance for the excesses of the Hindus and the Mohammadans.

But some of his friends made use of this opportunity in other ways. They called a conference which was attended by the representatives of all the communities. At this conference the problem of Hindu-Muslim Unity was discussed and many valuable decisions were reached. Swami Shraddhanand here played a leading part. He even promised to give up the Shuddhi work if the Mohammadans gave up their tabligh. Needless to say he fulfilled his promise to the letter, but the Mohammadans did not. So in the end he took to Shuddhi again.

To further his mission Swamiji founded an Urdu daily. It was named the *Tej*. After some time Swamiji went to South India. There he did much for the uplift of the non-Brahmins. He helped them when some of them started Satyagraha, at Waikom, in the Cochin State. The

object of this was to give the non-Brahmins the right to use the thoroughfare leading to the temple.

Then Swamiji felt the need for an English weekly. So he started the *Liberator*. It is a pity that it did not have a long life.

Swamiji was a man of varied activities. On his return from South India he founded the Kanya Gurukula, near Delhi, for the education of girls. The money for this was given by Seth Ragho Mal of Calcutta. He was a great admirer of Swamiji. On his death-bed his last wish was to see the Swami, but he died before the Swami arrived.

One day when Swamiji was at Delhi a Muslim woman came to him and said, "I want to be converted to Hinduism. I have always loved this religion and have read much about it. I have often thought of becoming a Hindu, but I have not had the courage to do so before. Please make a Hindu of me and adopt me as your daughter." The Swami listened to her and felt happy. After some time her father and husband arrived there. They tried to dissuade her, but she did not listen to them. Swamiji admired her courage and converted her to Hinduism.

But this brought a great deal of trouble on the head of the Swami. The husband filed a case against him and some others. It is interesting to relate, however, that the Magistrate acquitted them all. On account of this the Mohammadans felt some resentment against Swami Shraddhanand.

Just then Swami Shraddhanand's health was not good. He became worse on account of his unceasing activities, and fell a prey to pneumonia. During his illness he was treated by Dr. Ansari, the famous physician of Delhi. After a few days he recovered.

But Swamiji felt that his end was drawing near. He sent for his son, Mahashe Indra, and other fellow-workers. He told them that they should take down his will. But they would not, for they said, " You are all right now. The doctor says you will be able to move about in a few days." But the Swami thought otherwise.

During his illness one of his friends sent a wire asking about his health. He replied that his end was near. He said that he would be born again for the service of his country. Then he would have a stronger body. He said the same thing to Pt. Din Dyalu Sharma when he came

to enquire about his health. Everybody was surprised at this. But Swamiji felt he was right.

One afternoon Swamiji was reclining in his bed when he heard a noise outside. He asked his servant what it meant. He replied that a Moham-madan wanted to see him and that he had asked him to come another day. At this the Swami asked the servant to bring the man in. When he came in he said, "I want to have a talk with you about Islam." "But I am ill," said Swami Shraddhanand. "You can talk to me about it some other day." After this the man asked for water. Swamiji asked his servant to give it to him. He took the stranger outside and gave him water to drink. After drinking it the man came back again.

Then suddenly he drew a pistol from his pocket. He fired a shot at Swamiji which pierced his lungs. He fired another shot, but the servant rushed in and caught hold of him. He fired a third shot. The servant tried to snatch the pistol away from him. Then he fired at the servant. Just then the private secretary of Swami Shraddhanand arrived on the spot. He took the pistol away from the assassin and prevented him from running

away. After this the police arrived and arrested the man.

Thus ended the life of a great Indian. Somebody has said of his end, "Strange are the ways of God. It was a Mohammadan doctor who saved the Swami's life. But it was another Mohammadan who took it."

MAHATMA HANS RAJ

HOSHIARPUR is one of the most fertile districts in the Punjab. It has a fine climate and a good rainfall. A large number of streams flow through it. These are known as *chos*. It has many mountains which add to its beauty. Mangoes grow in plenty, and people call it "the Garden of the Punjab." It is inhabited mostly by Hindus. Of these the Brahmins and the Rajputs are the most important. Since the number of Brahmins is very large there are many temples and places of worship there. The Rajputs, however, are known for their strength and fighting powers. Most of these people live by tilling the soil.

In this district there is a small town named Bajwara. It is about three miles from Hoshiarpur. It is an ancient and historic town and was once the capital of a small state. Raja Sansar Chand was one of its most famous rulers. Through him the town came to be known far and wide. He built a strong fort there. If we pay a visit to this town we shall see the ruins of the fort even

now. This place is inhabited mostly by Kshatriyas.

It was in this town that Hans Raj was born in 1864. He came of a respectable Kshatriya family. This family had never been rich, but had always been known for its honesty and industry. One of its members was L. Chuni Lal. He had two sons. One was called Mulk Raj and the other was Hans Raj. Though this man was not rich he wanted to give his sons a good education. He therefore sent both of them to school.

Hans Raj was only ten years old when his father died. It was a terrible shock for all the family, especially for the poor mother. She did not know what would happen to her. She was poor and her children were very young. She did not know how she would be able to support herself and the children.

It is said that she went to her husband on his death-bed, and asked him, "Who will look after me when you are gone?" The dying man comforted her and said, "God will take care of you. He will provide for you and your children. It is true you are poor now, but I believe you will not remain poor very long. I know our name is

very obscure, but I am sure it will become famous soon. I have great hopes in my sons. They will be famous one day. Trust in God, therefore, and do not be afraid."

After the death of their father Mulk Raj left his native place. He had passed the Entrance examination and went to Lahore in search of a job. There he secured service in the Railway Department. It was a petty job which brought him only a few rupees a month. But on this small pay Mulk Raj supported his mother and the other members of the family. He sent for his younger brother and put him in the local Mission School at Lahore. He also made it his duty to look after his mother. He was able to do all this because he practised economy.

Thus Hans Raj read in the Mission High School, Lahore. He was a quiet, gentle and hard-working boy and was liked by all his teachers. His class-fellows also liked him very much. They all admired him for his simplicity and frugality. But the boy Hans Raj was indifferent to the praise of others. His only object at school was to make the best use of his time. So he read a lot, not only his textbooks but other books as well. He took a particular interest in history. He had a

great liking for the history of his own country, especially the history of ancient India. He read about the greatness of the Aryans. This filled him with pride in the past of his country.

It was this which brought him into trouble one day. The Headmaster of the Mission School was a kind-hearted person. But one day he made some unpleasant remarks about the ancient Aryans. He said, "The ancient Aryans used to worship idols. They were no better than barbarians. They were ignorant because they used to worship sticks and stones."

As soon as Hans Raj heard these remarks he was upset. Though his other class-fellows remained silent, he got up to protest against these remarks. He said to the Headmaster, "You are not right in what you say. The ancient Aryans were very wise. They used to worship only one God. I believe they were in some respects more civilised than we are to-day."

The Headmaster asked him where he had learned these things. Hans Raj referred to a book named *Qasas-i-Hind* (the Story of India) which was written in Urdu. In it were written the following words, "The Ancient Aryans were a wise, intelligent and good people. They were highly civilised

and were always guided by noble principles. They worshipped only one God, who pervades the whole world. They did not worship anything else but Him. Their religion was based on very lofty principles. They believed that action, worship and knowledge are the three chief parts of religion.” But this did not convince the Headmaster. He still kept to his own point of view. To prove it he referred to a book which was used in the school. It said that the ancient Aryans were barbarians.

But Hans Raj believed that he was in the right and repeated the words again. This annoyed the Headmaster very much and he ordered him to leave the school. So he did not attend the school for two days. On the third day he was asked to come back. After this nothing happened until, at the age of sixteen, he passed the Entrance examination. This was in 1880.

This affair with the Headmaster had its lesson for the sensitive soul of Hans Raj. He made up his mind to give people a correct picture of the ancient Aryan civilization. He also resolved to spread the message of the Vedas. Fortunately these two ideas of his were in harmony with the

spirit of the Arya Samaj, which had been established in the Punjab only a few years. He was naturally drawn towards it and began to attend its weekly meetings. There he learnt a great deal about the greatness of the ancient Indians from lectures and sermons.

But he learnt much more from L. Sain Das. An old Sanskrit poet says, “Good company removes stupidity and dullness. It makes us truthful in speech. It adds to our reputation. It washes away our sins. It keeps us always happy and satisfied. It spreads our fame in all parts of the world. There is hardly anything that good company does not do for men.” This proved true in the case of Hans Raj. His contact with L. Sain Das did him much good at that time, for this man was the leader of the Arya Samaj. He was respected by everybody for his noble character and simplicity of life.

Even in those days when every educated person liked to go about in western clothes, L. Sain Das kept to his Indian dress. Besides this, he was known for the purity and nobility of his character. He was above all a person who exercised a great influence on the young. Hans Raj came under his influence and learnt many good things from

him. To this day he mentions his name with respect and gratitude.

After passing the Entrance examination Hans Raj entered the Government College, Lahore. This period of his life was fruitful in two ways. In the first place, he made friends with many fine young men. Only the names of two of these need be mentioned here. One was Pt. Guru Dutt and the other was L. Lajpat Rai. These three young men might be called "the Three Musketeers" of the Arya Samaj. They did a great deal for it.

Guru Dutt was a great scholar. He was one of the best brains of his time. A student of science, he was also familiar with literature. His memory was wonderful and his intellect very keen. He could write English very well. L. Lajpat Rai was a young man of great energy. He could speak in a way which moved people. He was a great orator. Hans Raj was known for his common-sense, wisdom and foresight. He thought things out calmly and did his work patiently and steadily. These three were the pride of the Arya Samaj. Though they differed from one another, they had one thing in common. They were very much devoted to the Arya Samaj.

L. Sain Das knew how useful these young men could be to the Arya Samaj. So he took exceptional interest in them. Even though they were young, he entrusted them with responsible work. At that time the Arya Samaj was in its infancy. It needed an organ for making its ideals known to the people. L. Sain Das, therefore, started *The Regenerator of the Arya Varta*, an English weekly. He asked Pt. Guru Dutt and L. Hans Raj to edit it. Other Arya Samajists were surprised at this. But L. Sain Das knew better. He knew that the young men would make a success of their job. And so they did.

But it meant hard work for them. Hans Raj, especially, did not spare himself. Every day he would come back from the college at eleven o'clock. Then he would go straight to the press. There he would correct the proofs as well as revise the articles sent by others. He would also write something of his own. At two o'clock he was free. Then he would go home and take his meal.

That he wrote quite well for his age none can deny. His first article was shown to a Bengalee gentleman, who liked it. But Hans Raj wanted to get a certain other gentleman's opinion on it. He therefore took it to him. After going through

it the gentleman made only one change. He changed the word "slumber" into "deep sleep." This shows that even though an under-graduate Hans Raj could express himself with ease.

This journal served many useful purposes. In the first place, it helped to popularise modern science. This was done to remove the superstitions then current amongst the people. It also spread the message of the Vedas. This it did by interpreting every event in the light of these sacred books. But above all, it spoke for the Arya Samaj. It defended it against the attacks of others.

Though Hans Raj gave much time to this work, yet he did not neglect his studies. He took his Degree in 1885, and came second amongst the successful candidates. The first place was occupied by his friend, Pt. Guru Dutt.

Hans Raj now stood at the parting of the ways. At that time it meant a great deal to be a graduate. For a young man like him, many careers were open. He could have become a lawyer and grown rich. He could have joined one of the Government services and done well. He could also have sat for an examination and qualified himself as a Munsiff or an Extra Assistant Commissioner.

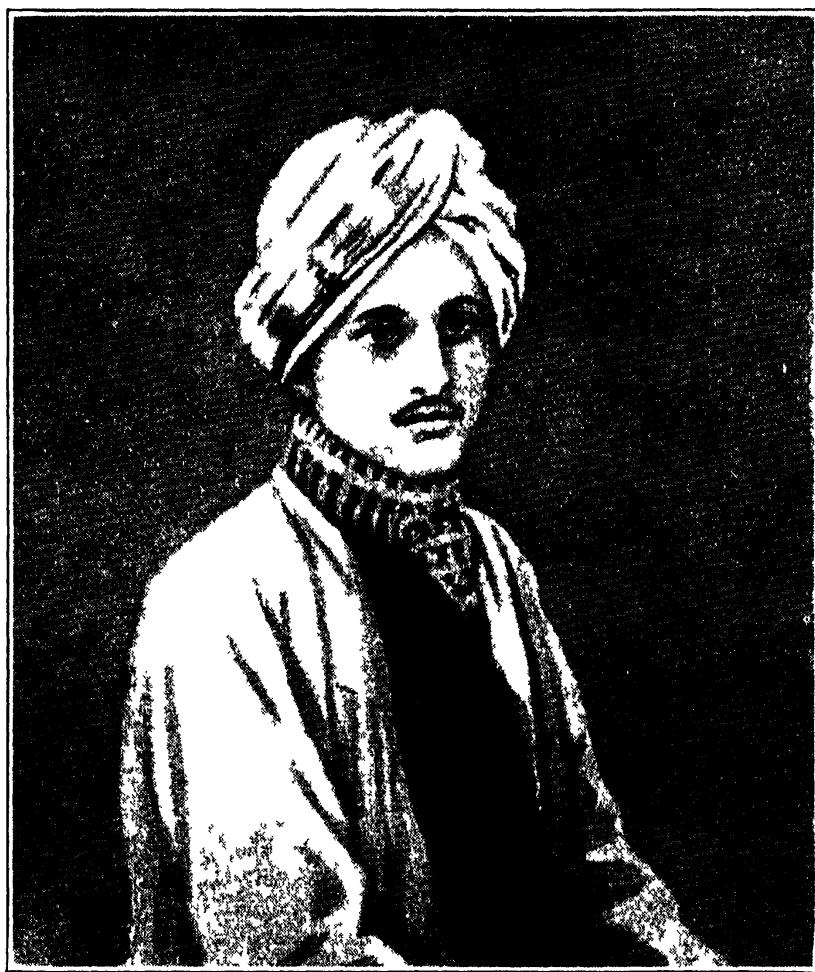
But before he could make up his mind about any of these things something happened which decided his future for him.

Swami Dayanand, the founder of the Arya Samaj, had died in 1883. The Arya Samajists of the Punjab wanted to keep his memory alive. But how could they do it? After thinking it over for a long time, they decided that a college should be established. It should be named the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, after Swami Dayanand. Its objects would be to encourage the study of English literature and sciences. It would also aim at spreading a knowledge of Sanskrit, and of the Vedas. Above all, it would seek to revive Hindu culture.

For this purpose about seven thousand rupees were collected. A deputation visited various places in the Punjab for raising funds. The result was that about thirty-two thousand rupees were collected. But this sum was not sufficient to run a college. The Arya Samajists were, naturally, filled with disappointment. They did not know what to do. But Hans Raj came to their rescue.

It happened like this. After his graduation Hans Raj wanted to devote himself to the work of the Arya Samaj. He wanted to do so as an

honorary worker, that is, as one who would not get any pay for his work. This was, however, a very difficult thing to do for a man of Hans Raj's



MAHATMA HANS RAJ IN 1886

means. As we know, his father had left him nothing. His brother also was not very rich. So how could he do it?

One day he happened to talk this matter over with his brother. Being a generous and noble person, he at once replied, "If this is what you want to do, please do not hesitate because of money. It is true I am not very rich. Still, I will share with you whatever I have. While you serve the country I will do everything to keep you happy." These words filled Hans Raj with courage and hope. As his mind was definitely made up he wrote to L. Sain Das offering his honorary services to the college.

This offer gladdened the hearts of the Arya Samajists. They started the D.A.-V. College on the 1st of June, 1886. L. Hans Raj was appointed its first honorary Headmaster. Though young, he managed the school very well. It had five hundred students by the end of the first year. Two years later Intermediate classes were started. In 1894 B.A. classes were added. L. Hans Raj was then made the Principal of the college. He served in this capacity for twenty-five years.

For the next twenty-five years, therefore, the story of his life is the story of the college. As L. Lajput Rai remarked, "L. Hans Raj is the one person who has given his all for the college. It is impossible to think of the college without him.

He has never spared himself in its interests. He has been its life and soul."

Another gentleman has remarked, "We can learn much from L. Hans Raj. His life has been a life of simplicity. He has lived like a poor man in the service of the college. To him the college has been everything and he has served it with his whole heart. Indeed, he gave up everything for its sake. Nobody can find fault with his life, it is so pure. The services that he has rendered to the public are many and for this he will always be remembered. But what has distinguished him most has been his steadfastness of purpose. He has never left anything unfinished, which he has once set his heart on doing."

We may, therefore, ask ourselves what L. Hans Raj has done for the college.

In the first place, he made the college a monument of self-help. Before this college was founded, people never thought that a college in India could be run by an Indian principal. But L. Hans Raj showed that this was possible. Again, it was thought that it was not good for a college that its staff should be entirely Indian. But he was able to manage the college with only Indians as members of the staff. It was also believed that

for the success of an institution the management must have some officials on it. But this college was run without the help of any officials. Again, it was believed that Government aid was necessary for an institution like the D.A.-V. College. But it was run with the help of subscriptions from the public and especially from the Arya Samajists. L. Hans Raj thus made the college a unique institution.

This was not the only way in which he served the college. He also did a good deal of teaching. At first he lectured on English literature. But this meant too much strain on him, so he began to teach the students History and Economics. These lectures were very useful to young men. He delivered them not merely to enable students to pass the examination, but to give them a thorough knowledge of the subject. Even to-day it is possible to meet some of his students in the Punjab who would say, "L. Hans Raj's lectures on History and Political Economy opened our eyes. In teaching us these subjects he showed how nations can become great. Without being unfair to any nation he filled us with a love of India's greatness and made patriots of us all."

Though L. Hans Raj felt very happy in lecturing on History he felt still more happy in explaining the doctrines of the Vedas and the mission of the Arya Samaj. He lectured on religion for a long time. These lectures were not dull and uninteresting, as lectures on religion often are. They were, on the contrary, very elevating. They created reverence in the minds of the young. They also made them zealous workers in the cause of the Arya Samaj. There were not a few students whose lives were entirely changed on account of these talks.

L. Hans Raj was thus a professor in the true sense of the word. He did not take interest in merely teaching others. He also took delight in his own reading. Whatever spare time he had was devoted to books, especially books on History. After some time it became a passion with him to study Sanskrit. He soon became proficient and read a lot of Sanskrit literature. A story is told about a European Sanskrit scholar who went to see L. Hans Raj. During the conversation he referred to some of the difficulties he had experienced in his study of Sanskrit literature. He also said that he had brought these to the notice of some other Sanskrit scholars in India, but they

had not thrown any light on them. Great was his surprise when L. Hans Raj discussed these things with him and satisfied him on every point.

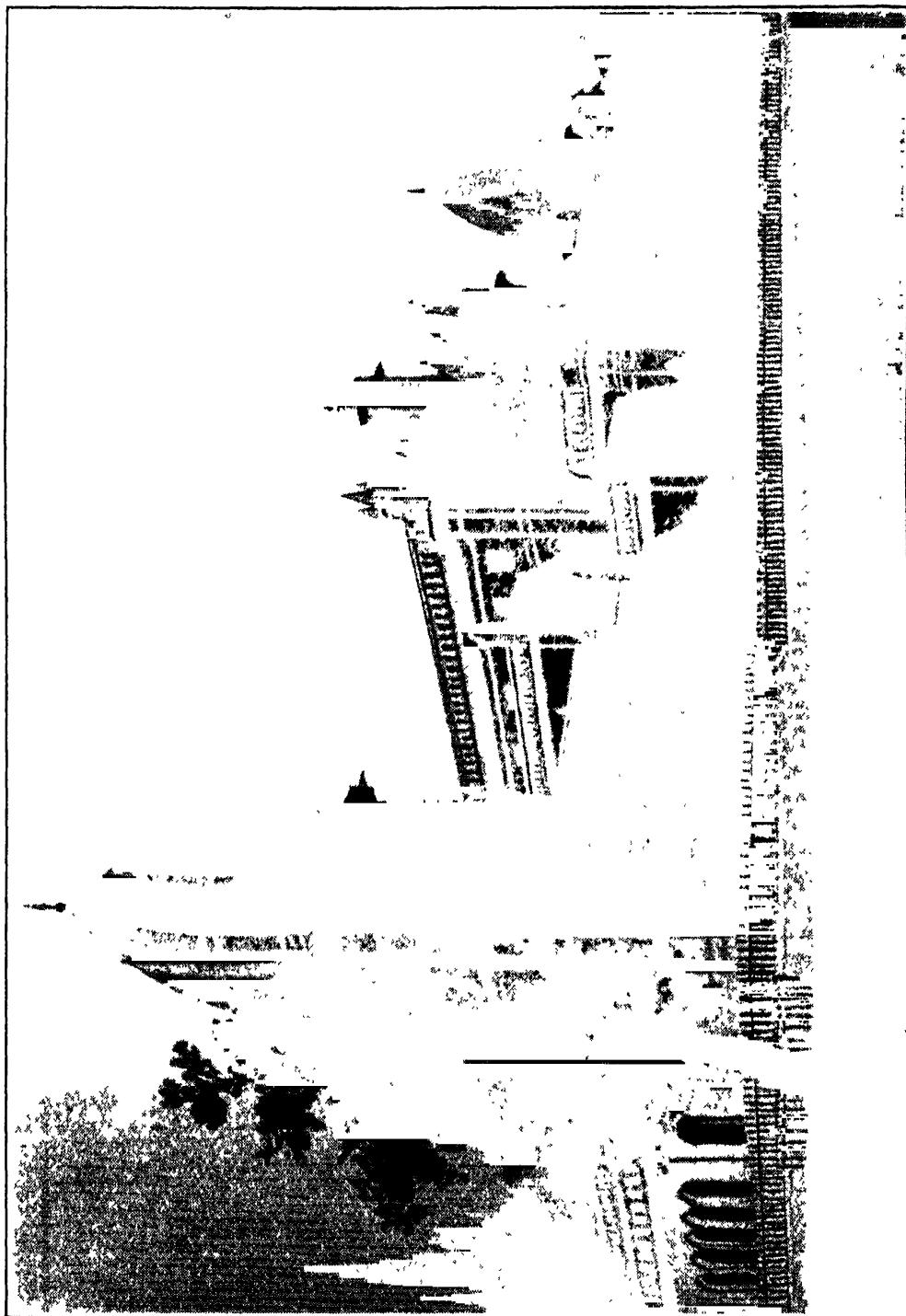
L. Hans Raj had not been the principal of the college very long, when L. Sain Das died. He had been the President of the Lahore Arya Samaj as well as that of the Provincial Representative Assembly of the Arya Samajists. On his death the question arose as to who should succeed him. After much thought L. Hans Raj was made President of both these organisations. Thus he became leader of the Arya Samaj. This was really remarkable, for L. Hans Raj was at that time only twenty-five years old. But he was wise beyond his years and proved a great success.

After some time differences arose amongst the Arya Samajists. They were partly due to the fact that some people did not like the college. They thought that it was not fulfilling the real mission of Swami Dayanand. L. Hans Raj was criticised. All sorts of things were said against his person and policy. But he remained unmoved by these things. They did not disturb the serenity of his mind. He went on his way, calmly and steadfastly.

After some time there occurred a split amongst the Arya Samajists. L. Hans Raj then became the leader of one section of the Arya Samaj. In this capacity he had to do much work. In the first place, he had to establish Arya Samajes all over the Punjab. This meant much travelling. But he did it with pleasure. He had also to organise a new Provincial Assembly of the representatives of the Arya Samajists. This was not an easy thing to do. It required much money. He was able, however, to collect the necessary funds. Then he had to find preachers of the right sort. But even in this difficult task he succeeded.

It soon became necessary for the Arya Samajists to have a paper of their own. *The Arya Messenger*, the English organ of the Arya Samaj, was again taken in hand. The *Arya Gazette*, an Urdu weekly, was also founded. For some time it was edited jointly by L. Lajpat Rai and L. Hans Raj. After some time L. Lajpat Rai fell ill. Then L. Hans Raj became its sole editor. He contributed many articles to it. His articles on the sixteen Sanskaras were very widely read.

All this work, however, did not interfere with his work at the college. The college went on growing in numbers as well as in influence. After



D. A.-V. COLLEGE BUILDING

some time similar institutions were started at Jullundur and Hoshiarpur. Then schools sprang up at various places in the Punjab. It is no wonder that to-day there are about three hundred schools and colleges in the province. These have as many as seventy thousand students on their rolls. On them the Arya Samajes spend more than Rs. twenty lacs every year. Besides these there are an Ayurvedic College, a College of Divinity and an Industrial School. All these are, in a way, the children of the D.A.-V. College, Lahore.

After working at the college for more than twenty-five years L. Hans Raj retired. This was in 1911. He was, of course, presented with many addresses of congratulation. A big hall was also constructed in his memory and was named the Hans Raj Hall. Many people were sorry that he was leaving the institution he had built up, but he felt happy because he was leaving the college in the hands of one of his most able pupils.

The question may here be asked: What did L. Hans Raj do for the college? In the first place, he popularised Hindi and Sanskrit. Before the college was established not more than fifty students in the Punjab sat for examinations in Hindi or Sanskrit. It was mainly on account of his efforts

that many more students began to study these languages. The result of this study was that Hindu young men became familiar with their own literature, culture and civilization.

Thus they began to take an interest in the past of their country. They became familiar with heroes and heroines of their nation, and learnt the value of their ancient ideals.

This came about not only as a result of the teaching of these languages. It was done more by the example of L. Hans Raj. They saw in him those virtues which the ancient sages possessed. His was a life of simplicity and he was free from pride of any kind. In this connection a very interesting story is told.

A gentleman from Rawalpindi, who was not an Arya Samajist, sent his son to the D.A.-V. High School, Lahore. After he had passed the Entrance examination, the son insisted on joining the D.A.-V College. The father wanted to send him to some other college. So he asked his son to change his mind. But the son would not. At last the father came to Lahore with his son in order to put him in the D.A.-V. College.

But before he left Lahore he felt he would like to meet the principal. However, he hesitated to

do so. He thought that the principal would be a lordly person living in a grand bungalow and waited upon by many servants. Great was his surprise when he was taken to an ordinary-looking house. There he found a gentleman dressed in very ordinary clothes sitting on a wooden cot. This gentleman spoke to him very kindly and after some time he discovered that he was talking to the principal of the college. He was so struck with the simplicity of the gentleman that he became a member of the Arya Samaj.

This simplicity is a feature of the Life-Members of the D.A.-V. College. The Order was started by L. Hans Raj in 1902. Distinguished graduates of Indian Universities, provided they are Arya Samajists, can join. They have to serve the college for twenty years for a small monthly allowance. Their chief work is to teach in the college or school with a view to furthering the mission of the Arya Samaj.

This Order at present has about sixteen members. Most of these are managing the different departments of the college. L. Sain Das, who was at one time the Principal of the college, was also one of its members. So also was L. Diwan Chand, M.A., Principal of the D.A.-V. College,

Cawnpore, and Vice-Chancellor of Agra University.

One thing which was a part of L. Hans Raj's life was his love of economy. It was natural, therefore, that the college should also be run with the strictest possible economy. Sir John Maynard, late Vice-Chancellor of the Punjab University, once said, "The management of the college knows how to make a rupee go towards doing the work of rupees two or even more." This is perfectly true. It is on account of this that the college is able to do so much. This naturally means a great deal of work for the principal and the office-bearers. But they do it willingly and gladly.

In this connection a story is told about R. B. L. Lal Chand. He was one of the foremost lawyers in the province and also rose to the Bench. While he was one of the judges of the Chief Court, Punjab, he acted as the President of the D.A.-V. College Managing Committee. One day a friend, desiring to see him, was asked to go to the D.A.-V. College where he could be found. On reaching the place he found him supervising the work of some carpenters. He was astonished at this and said, "A man like you should not attend to such

petty work." "My friend," replied L. Lal Chand, "why not, when the money that is being spent is the money of very poor people?" It is this sense of duty and love of economy which have distinguished the workers of this college.

After retiring from the college, L. Hans Raj was elected President of the D.A.-V. College Managing Committee. His own idea was to devote himself to the work of the Arya Samaj, but he had to accept this office on account of the death of L. Lal Chand. At that time no one else was thought to be equal to this responsibility. He continued to work in this capacity till 1918. Then he refused to hold this office and made room for a younger man. While in office he fully upheld its traditions. He saw to it that the work expanded. He also saw to it that no money was wasted.

He attended the office every day for three hours. He looked into every detail of the management himself. He granted interviews to the heads of the various departments of the college, and discussed things with them in person. He also established a College of Indian Medicine. Another thing he did was to get a number of religious readers prepared. These were suitable for the different classes in the Arya schools and colleges.

It was through these that religious instruction was to be imparted in future.

His life, however, was not without its troubles. During these years he had to face two great trials, and it is encouraging to relate that he came out successful from both. Afterwards he stood higher in the estimation of the people than he had ever done before. Everybody admired him for his calmness, his courage and his serenity. There were some who thought that he was another Harish Chandra. As Harish Chandra had faced trials successfully and manfully, so had he.

The first of these trials came when his son, Bal Raj, was arrested on a charge of sedition. He was reading in the M.A. class when he was involved in the Delhi Conspiracy Case. People at once came forward with offers of help of every kind. But L. Hans Raj refused all such offers. His elder brother, L. Mulk Raj, now a prosperous banker, said that he would be responsible for all the expenses. He nobly fulfilled this promise as he had done before, though the expenses amounted to much. It is said that L. Mulk Raj had to sell off a house or two in order to meet them.

At first the young man was sentenced to transportation for life. An appeal was filed in

the High Court. Then the sentence was reduced to seven years' imprisonment. After serving out his sentence Bal Raj came out and set up as a business-man. He has been doing well in this ever since.

A Sanskrit poet has said, "Before I have crossed the ocean of one grief, another grief befalls me. Surely troubles always come in large numbers." This proved true in the case of L. Hans Raj. While his son was standing his trial his wife fell dangerously ill. She was a very noble lady. She had shared gladly all the hardships of her husband. She was also a public-spirited woman. It was she who had been responsible for spreading the Arya Samaj amongst the women of the Punjab. She had started a girls' school for the education of girls. For these things she had herself collected funds. She was as much devoted to her home as to the cause of the Arya Samaj.

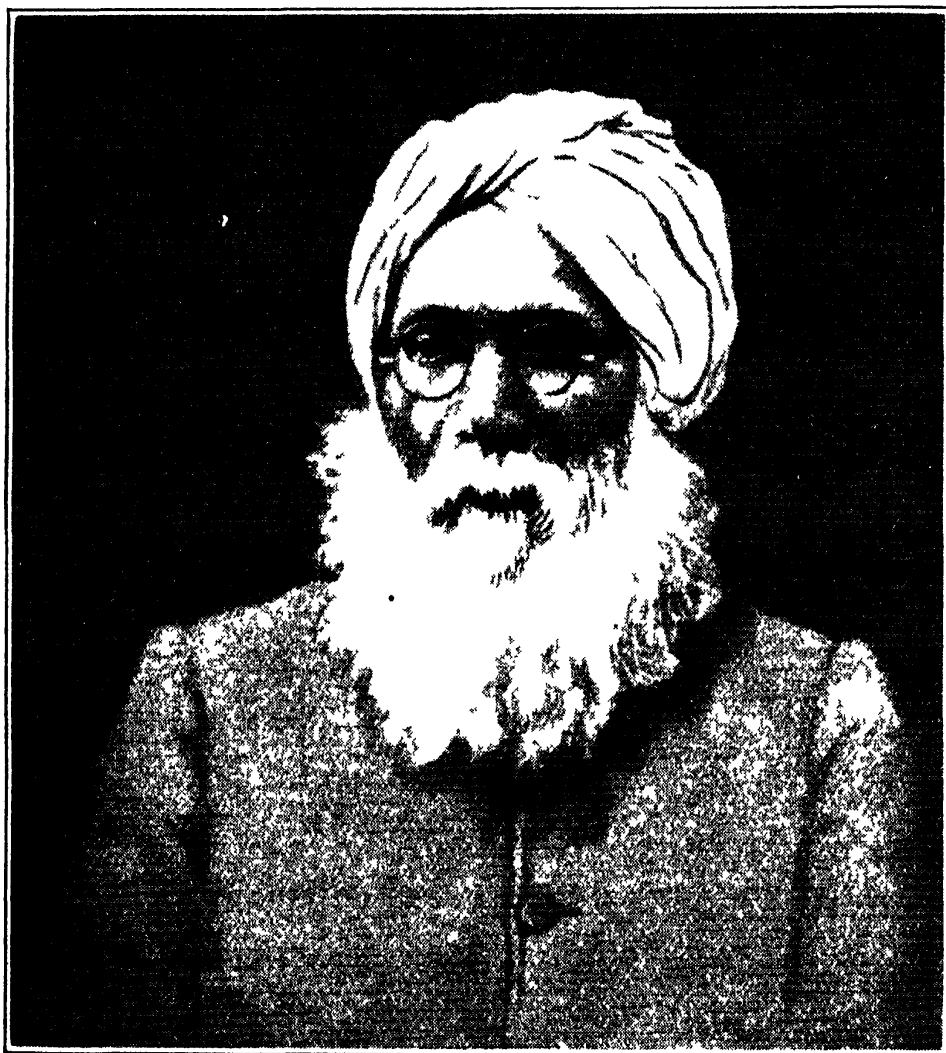
Her health had been indifferent for some time. But the trial of her son made her condition worse. At last the doctors gave up all hope of her life. On her death-bed she expressed a wish to see her son. Her husband was naturally very anxious to do what she asked. The magistrate was approached with an application for bail on behalf of Bal Raj.

This was granted. When the happy news was brought to the dying mother she felt glad. But the police refused to accept the responsibility of taking Bal Raj to Lahore, and her hopes were dashed to the ground. She thus died with a broken heart, without seeing her son.

These two tragedies might have broken any man. But they did not ruffle L. Hans Raj. He went about his work as usual. He received visitors and attended to them as usual. He visited the different Arya Samajes and lectured there as before. Even if anybody alluded to these subjects he kept quiet. At that time he showed the indifference to pain which the stoic used to have. It was no wonder that people began to call him a Mahatma. This title was quite justified. He seems to have a soul remarkable for its greatness and strength.

In 1918 Mahatma Hans Raj was asked to preside over the Punjab Educational Conference. This was but natural, for nobody in the province had served longer in the field of education than he. As president he delivered a very fine address which appealed to everybody. He said in the course of it, "Let there be no illiterate person in this province. Primary education should be made free and

compulsory for all, for without it no nation can make progress in the world." He suggested that



MAHATMA HANS RAJ

in every primary school students should be taught how to be good farmers and good citizens. He further added that the vernaculars should be

made the medium of instruction. He also dealt with many other problems.

After his retirement from the Presidentship of the D.A.-V. College Managing Committee, he was elected President of the Provincial Representative Assembly. This was the work which had always been very dear to his heart, for it meant that he would be responsible for spreading the message of the Vedas. But this was not a very easy thing to do.

On taking office he found that the funds of the Assembly were very scanty. The number of the preachers was also limited. The Arya Samajes in the mofussil were also indifferent. Some of them had not paid any money for the Assembly funds. Others had not held the anniversaries for a long time. The first thing that he did was to collect funds for the Sabha. This he did by going about from one place to another. The next thing he did was to raise the number of the preachers. He then asked them to visit the Arya Samajes at different places. By going there they realised their duties.

To achieve all this he had to be in the office every day for three hours. He also went about from place to place delivering lectures. These

lectures were always much appreciated. It is true that he is not a fiery orator like L. Lajpat Rai. But his speeches have a quiet charm of their own. He is always at his best when he is relating the history of the Arya Samaj. While doing so he often tells his hearers about the struggles, hardships and self-sacrifice of the Arya Samajists of days gone by. He is equally good when he explains the lessons to be learnt from the study of the Ramayana and the Mahabhatta. His lectures are also very effective when he explains the doctrines of the Arya Samaj. His great virtue as a speaker is that he makes clear everything he says.

He was still the President of this Assembly when famine broke out in Gharwal. This was due to the shortage of the rain. After a short time he received letters from Gharwal asking for help. So he issued an appeal for funds. The public had so much confidence in him that he collected a great deal of money for the purpose. He then sent a large number of volunteers there. They opened depots at many places, and grain was distributed to the people.

After a few months the famine disappeared. Then he found that he had still some money at

his disposal. This he used for the good of the people in Gharwal in other ways. He founded scholarships for Gharwalis who wanted education. He also started a few schools there. But all these things he did after seeing things for himself.

It was in 1919 that the Indian Social Conference was held at Amritsar. Mahatma Hans Raj was asked to preside over it. As president he delivered a very interesting address. In it he gave a programme of work which social reformers should follow. He asked them to remove the poverty of India. "This," he said, "can be done if we do not spend too much on festivals and ceremonies. It can also be prevented if the Indians spend money on goods produced in their own country." He also deplored the absence of Brahmcharya among the Indians. "Child marriages," he said, "have made our nation weak. It is necessary, therefore, to abolish this system."

Then he spoke of some of the evils amongst the Hindus. He specially referred to the caste system. It had divided the Hindus into so many small groups, which had not much to do with one another. For instance, the members of one group would not dine with those of another. The members of one group also would not marry

amongst the members of another group. The result was that it was very difficult to find suitable matches for young Hindus. The caste system was also responsible for preventing the Hindus from taking part in certain trades and professions.

He also referred to the depressed classes. He was very sorry to find that one third of the Hindus in India should be known as Shudras. These were treated very badly and were not allowed to mix with the high-caste Hindus. They could not worship in their places of worship. Nor could they draw water from their wells. He pleaded strongly for a better treatment of these people.

He also drew attention to the problem of widows. He regretted that they were not given their right place in society. He said that Hindu widows should be allowed to re-marry. If this were done, some of them would not change their religion. At the same time, Hindu young men would not be obliged to embrace Christianity or Islam for purposes of marriage. Moreover, he criticised the present system of female education. He thought that women should not be given the same education as men. Their education should help them in the home.

He believed that social reform was very important. It was very necessary for people to give the matter their serious attention.

In 1920 Mahatma Gandhi started the Non-co-operation Movement. One of the objects of this Movement was to boycott existing schools and colleges. Fiery speeches were made to the students to leave their schools and colleges. Most of them acted on this advice. The result was that some of the institutions in the Punjab had to be closed down. Then the Congress leaders made an appeal to the students of the D.A.-V. College to strike. This was too much for Mahatma Hans Raj. He could not bear to see the college for which he had done so much close down.

He went to the college, therefore, and delivered a speech to the students. He asked them not to be misled by what others said. He advised them to consult their teachers and parents in this matter. He also told them that they would have a new institution for imparting national education if there was any demand for it. The speech produced a good effect and made the students think seriously about the matter.

Mahatma Hans Raj was not content merely with criticism. He drew up schemes for a

non-University High School as well as for a University for Women. Before many months had passed the D.A.-V. College had three new departments. The first was the College of Divinity where Vedic missionaries were to be trained. The second was the Industrial High School. The third was the Institute of Industrial Chemistry. All these have been doing useful work for many years.

For some time Mahatma Hans Raj remained busy with these things. Then came very sad news from Malabar. It was about the forcible conversion of some Hindus to Islam by the Moplahs. Mahatma Hans Raj enquired into the matter and issued an appeal for funds. But it was very coldly received by the Press. Still he persevered, and felt very happy when his own old mother sent a contribution. He is said to have remarked at the time, "I will now succeed in my work because it has been blessed by my mother." After this he received several contributions. Then he sent volunteers to Malabar. They not only distributed relief among the victims but also succeeded in persuading the Hindus to take the converts back into their fold. In this way Mahatmaji succeeded in what he had planned.

The doings of the Moplahs in Malabar opened the eyes of the Hindus. They also made Mahatma Hans Raj think deeply about the matter. He felt that the Hindus should be united. So he drew up his programme for Hindu Sangathan. He appealed to the Hindus to have the same respect for the Vedas as the Mohammadans have for the Quran and the Christians for the Bible. He said in a speech which he delivered, “Let the Hindus learn to pray together like the Mohammadans. Let them look after their widows and orphans as other communities do. Let them remember that Hinduism should not be confined to India only, but should become a world religion. The Hindus should learn Hindi and make it the most important language in India. They should work for the uplift of the depressed classes and do away with the false distinctions of caste. Every Hindu should feel that all Hindus are his brothers.” If to-day there exists a strong Hindu feeling in India, much of the credit for it goes to Mahatma Hans Raj.

In 1923 Mahatma Hans Raj became connected with another movement. It was known as the Shuddhi Movement. Its purpose was to convert people to Hinduism. For this he was much

criticised. He was described as a person who was trying to destroy Hindu-Muslim unity. But he thought otherwise. He believed that as it is the right of every Christian and Mohammadan to convert people to his own religion so should it be the right of a Hindu. This movement had its headquarters at Agra, which Mahatmaji visited personally.

In the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh there lived some Rajputs who were Mohammadans in name only. Otherwise they followed many Hindu customs. They burnt their dead just as the Hindus do. They married according to Hindu rites. They also performed many other Hindu ceremonies. An attempt was made, therefore, to bring them back into the fold of Hinduism. In this matter the reformers were greatly helped by the Rajputs themselves. Even the All-India Rajput Sabha passed a resolution pressing for their conversion.

Mahatma Hans Raj had to work very hard there. The result was that he fell ill. For some months he suffered very badly. He slowly recovered, and as soon as he got well, he took the field again.

The first thing he did was to attend the Unity Conference. This was held at Delhi. Its

purpose was to bring the Hindus and the Moham-madans together. Mahatma Hans Raj was one of those who were invited to attend. When he went there he made a speech. In it he said some very noble things. One of the remarks he made in his address was, "A change of heart is necessary on both sides before there can be any unity." Truer words than these were never spoken.

Happily Mahatma Hans Raj is still alive. He is still working hard and inspiring others to do the same.